

Congressman Childers Votes to Protect Seniors' Access to Doctors

November 19, 2009

Washington, DC – Today, Congressman Travis Childers (MS-01) voted to preserve seniors' access to their doctors by fixing the way Medicare pays physicians. The Medicare Physician Payment Reform Act will permanently reform the Medicare payment system, repealing a 21 percent cut in payments to doctors scheduled to take place in January and replacing it with a stable system that protects seniors, preserves their relationship with their doctors, and promotes primary care.

"Today's legislation tackles one of seniors' main concerns – that significant pay cuts could encourage doctors to stop seeing Medicare patients. By fixing this system in a responsible way we are ensuring that our seniors have reliable access to their doctors and the primary care they need," said Congressman Childers. "In particular, this bill will protect areas like North Mississippi from massive Medicare cuts that would have had an especially horrific impact on rural providers. Medicare is a lifeline for America's seniors and this bill takes crucial steps toward strengthening it and providing the highest quality of care and benefits for our elderly. I am also pleased that this bill protects the interests of our seniors while adhering to fiscally responsible PAYGO legislation."

The House attached statutory "pay-as-you-go," or PAYGO, legislation to the Medicare Physician Payment Reform Act before sending it to the Senate. With statutory PAYGO in place, all new tax and entitlement policies must be offset, restoring fiscal discipline and bringing down the deep deficits that face our nation.

The bill is supported by a wide range of organizations representing patients, doctors and other providers, including the American Medical Association, AARP, the Military Officers Association of America, the American Academy of Family Physicians, the American College of Physicians, the American College of Surgeons, the Center for Medicare Advocacy, the Medicare Rights Center, and the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare.

A pro-gun, pro-life Mississippian, Congressman Travis Childers (D-MS) represents the First Congressional District in North Mississippi. He is a member of the fiscally conservative Blue Dog Coalition and serves on the House Agriculture and Financial Services Committee. Congressman Childers co-chairs the reestablished bipartisan Congressional Rural Caucus and was appointed to the bipartisan Second Amendment Task Force. For more information, visit www.childers.house.gov

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